

The Role of Metacognitive Strategy in Learning English

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ABSTRACT

The world changes into the massive use of technology advance. Learning English language is a kind of adaptation to face this digital era. Learning a second or foreign language need a strategy. It will help students to acquire and use the language more effectively. Many students spend more time to obtain the language, but a good learner who uses the learning strategy can achieve the language easily than who does not. Learning strategy is mainly important to assist students passing their areas of weakness and improving their areas of competence. It provides learners not only to control their thoughts but also their actions more productively. This paper aims to get review of learning strategies use in learning process. There are many strategies can be applied, one of them is metacognitive strategy. This study proposes some important issues dealing with metacognitive strategy. Metacognitive strategy makes learners aware of the learning style and helps them use the strategy to activate, observe, and evaluate the learning.

Keywords: *learning strategy, metacognitive strategy*

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the fundamental aims of contemporary research in education is to relate it to the development of this era. Education has obligation to prepare the learners to adjust with the world changes. Learning English as second or foreign language is a must for learners to face the real-life society. Educators should provide the learners how to gain the sense of responsibility for their learning. In the learning process, learning strategy plays the important role. Learners are able to enhance their own learning and overcome their weaknesses. Good language learners usually use strategies that appropriate to their own style of learning, personality, and the purpose of learning the language. Using the proper learning strategies, the students can take responsibility for their learning by enhancing learner competency, independence, and self-direction. Oxford [1] defines that learning strategy is a set of actions done by the learner to make the learning process easier, quicker, more controlled, effective, pleasant, and adaptable.

Learning strategies are technique that students develop while they are learning language. The students use the learning strategy to assess the achievement of the learning process and to enhance their own learning comprehension. According to Mayer in Lessard-Clouston [2] learning strategies is students' actions and ideas that are considered to impact the encoding process. Supported this theory, Nunan [3] said that the learning strategy is mental processes which students

implement in learning activities. Besides, O Malley and Chamot [4] described that learning strategies as particular attitude or beliefs that students use to assist the learning, comprehension and acquire relevant concept. It can be stated that learning strategies are important in learning process. Learners engage in mental and behavioral to enhance their performance and understanding during the learning activity.

Learning strategies provide a number of advantages that can help learners enhance their abilities. As stated by Lessard-Clouston [2], there are four benefits of language learning strategies. Firstly, learners use the language learning strategies and adapt it into their need. Secondly, learners' language skills will expand and strengthen, it can be seen in four major skill of English language; reading, listening, writing and speaking. Next, language learning strategy can be both visible; activities, stages, methods and invisible; thoughts, ideas, mental process. Finally, language learning strategy will let the learners associate with vocabulary knowledge, grammar rules, etc to perceive the language better.

Richards & Schmidt [5] describe that language learning strategy into four categories. They are; cognitive, metacognitive, social and management strategy. They define cognitive strategies as the ability of students to examine and analyze the information while metacognitive strategies are the processes of thinking that consist of planning, determining the way of learning, and evaluating the learning activity. Students also use social strategies to find companions

with whom they can share and interact and the last is management strategies, which include things like establishing the characteristics that will be utilized, as well as setting the time and location while learning a language. Learners should understand the learning well, so they need a strategy to help them to increase language learning. One of the strategies needed by learners to help their problems in learning English is a metacognitive strategy.

2. METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY

Metacognition has persisted to be a significant area of research, and its application to education has continued expand. Metacognition was first introduced by Flavell [6] that defined metacognition as the students' ability to recognize their cognitive functions, control them while they run, monitor and evaluate them according to the needs of the learning process. The metacognitive strategies show the awareness and control of all the cognitive processes. Lay [7] state that metacognition is usually described as thinking of thinking process, understanding about what we know and recognize what we do not know and is a process of managing the thinking. Hacker [8] defined that metacognitive strategy is the process to handle thinking and learning. Primarily, it requires the student to be conscious of their learning, to evaluate their learning needs, to provoke strategies to meet their needs, and to apply those strategies.

In the area of learning, the term metacognitive takes important part. The language skills of the students will increase by having metacognitive strategies. It will support the students to handle their own learning process as metacognitive is management to mental process. According to Dirkes [9] metacognitive strategies are; (1) activities to connect recent information to previous knowledge; (2) consciously to select the thinking strategies and (3) the thinking processes involve; planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Furthermore, it is supported by Richard & Schmidt [5] in applying metacognitive knowledge, the students will identify which types of learning activities are challenging, which method that is suitable to achieve the goal of learning, and how to solve various kinds of problems. It will also strengthen learners' learning process. Metacognitive strategy assists the learners to manage their chosen plans, monitor their activities and advancement in learning, and evaluate the learning process. This series of stages will enhance learners' mental process and learning attitude. Learners can learn more effectively when they utilize this metacognitive strategy since they have arranged what they need to do and what they do not need to do.

Managing the thought and mental process in learning can gain an effective learning habits as a student. Kuhn [10] argued that metacognitive strategy has necessary indications in current context, since it advocates a critical role for meta-level process. Kuhn added that becoming conscious of controlling and monitoring their process, at the end of the activity the students can achieve the better result. Consequently, the role of metacognitive strategy is really important in learning English, since it will help the students to plan their own style of learning from the starting, monitoring it on the process of learning, and evaluate all the activities in the end of the cycle.

Metacognitive strategy combines various attended thinking and reflective processes in language learning. It can be classified into three primary facets, planning; monitoring; and evaluating [1], [4]. Planning includes establishing the goals, overview the knowledge and activities. Monitoring includes self-management, the learners are able to control their actions and behaviors, as well as self-evaluation, the students are able to analyze their level of achievement in learning. Evaluating includes the strengthen point of students learning. In evaluation, the students can obtain such as how to analyze what is the minus in their learning activity, reward to appreciate themselves and enhance their motivation in learning, and arrange revision to review and modify their learning strategy.

2.1. Planning

Planning is significant metacognitive skill that learners do for learning, dealing with how well the students can predict the next learning activities in their instinct. Students are thinking about what they need to achieve and how to fulfill it. In order to the accomplish the best result in the process of learning English, the students need to control it by making plans. Hunnicut [11] said that planning is very crucial, relate to some reasons; it will support our mind to think in details, developing a good plan demands intelligent energy to think about what you are going to do next. Planning also make the program obvious, qualifying, and creating balance. In conclusion, by preparing good and proper plan for learning, learners will achieve the goal completely.

Planning is a great step to begin a process of learning. It becomes a grand map of what the students are going to do in learning. It focuses on selecting the learning strategy and setting goal of language learning. Planning also enhance students' attention, focus and motivation, which help the students to enrich their performance in the process of learning.

On the other hand, seem obvious that the learners will plan better if the pressure appears. Friend and

Hickling [12] argued that tension, such as competitiveness, urgency, intricacy, conflict, warfare, and overwhelm, will require people to plan critically. These strains will encourage the students to make proper plans, good decision, and satisfying progress.

2.2. Monitoring

Monitoring can be interpreted as controlling and having right actions to check the progress of learning to a satisfactory result. In this strategy, the learners not only need to check and try to understand the content of the task, but also will ask themselves whether they still use the strategies or not when the students have applied and implemented specific strategies, the students observe whether the strategies run better or not. White and Poster [13] stated that monitoring is a repeated, formative, and diagnostic assessment of any activity or behavior. They also said that monitoring is the key of evaluation. Schoenfeld in Doulik et al [14] describe monitoring as a core criterion of the problem-solving process and also as a basic element for successful task completing. In conclusion, by monitoring, learners are able to assess the quality of the learning process and accomplish their learning goal, the result will be more satisfaction and evaluation can be more eligible.

2.3. Evaluating

Evaluation is another crucial part in successful language learning. By having evaluation, students can identify what are their positive and negative in learning process, so the learners can revise their learning plan, control the process, and finally can get better result of learning process. Furthermore, according to Wilson and Dobson [15] evaluation will expand the learning target. After the students make the evaluation, they will perform better in future learning activities and get satisfied achievement as a result of the learning process. So, the student will show the progress day by day to be critical thinkers.

In addition, evaluation will be the way where the strategies can be powerful. Evaluation compromise with estimation and review to appraise what have been done and what have to be done. Belet and Guven [16] added that in metacognition, evaluation can be said as problem solving. By evaluating, the learners are able to cope their problems and obstacles in learning English. The learning process will get the best result if the students sustain a good evaluation in the process of metacognitive learning strategy.

3. CURRENT RESEARCH OF METACOGNITIVE STRATEGY

The contemporary studies found that the metacognitive strategies improve remarkably to

facilitate language learning. Penuela [17] studied on the impact of using metacognitive strategies to improve the language awareness on stress and intonation for English as a foreign language. It was a kind of qualitative action research; twelve adult students were given treatment with three cycles. In first cycle, learners were trained to apply of one metacognitive strategy for different purposes. The next cycle was learners studied to recognize a suprasegmental feature from video or audio input and the last cycle was learners practiced the metacognitive strategies to monitor their use of suprasegmental features. Three metacognitive strategies were used; overviewing, goal-setting, and self-evaluating to promote awareness of students on stress and intonation in English. Penuela proved that students who had high level of awareness were tendentious to use suprasegmental better than those who their level of awareness were low. Based on his studied, the learners might increase the awareness on metalinguistic awareness, learning awareness, and self-awareness.

Alamri [18] investigated metacognitive strategies applied by second language learner in writing an essay. This study also explored the correlation between the levels of students' language proficiency and the frequency of metacognitive strategies used by the students. The data collection was through a questionnaire completed by 61 undergraduate ESL international students which consisted of two parts; first, it concerns on numerous writing strategies that learners applied while doing a writing activity. Then, it was arranged to obtain some demographic information, for instance sex, age, and language proficiency. The result showed that students commonly used the three components of metacognitive strategies; monitoring, planning, evaluating. In addition, the findings indicated that students applied these strategies on their writing task since the students were conscious about the benefits of metacognitive strategies. Furthermore, it can be concluded that there was a positive relationship between the level of students' proficiency and the frequently uses of strategies. The learners who often applied metacognitive strategies had high English proficiency than those who supposed to have lower English proficiency.

Muhid et al, [19] conducted a quasi-experimental research dealing about the effectiveness of implementing metacognitive strategies on students' reading comprehension achievement. There were 25 students given treatment of metacognitive strategies during two months as experimental group. The students filled metacognitive strategies questionnaire consist of three strategies regarding on O'Malley, & Chamot's classification; planning strategy, self-monitoring strategy and evaluating strategy. The data showed that

the learners had better achievement in doing reading comprehension task when the metacognitive strategies were used in learning process, this was defined by students' scores of posttests was higher than students' pretest scores. The learners use nine sub-categories of metacognitive reading strategies for instance; advance organizer, self-management, comprehension monitoring, production monitoring, self-assessment, self-evaluation, self-reflection, selective attention and organizational planning. Among these strategies, it was found that the mostly applied by the students were selective attention, which consisted of two activities; deciding the major points in reading a text, like the title, the headings, sub-headings, the main idea, the graphic, and the structure of the text. The other activity in selective attention was retraction the weaknesses in reading comprehension so the students could anticipate for the next reading activity.

Cao [20] conducted a research on a hundred and thirty-nine vocational college students using questionnaire, listening comprehension test and interview to examine the implementation of metacognitive strategy in listening comprehension. The findings indicated that the use of metacognitive strategy by the students was relatively insignificant, and there is substantial difference in the applying of planning, monitoring, self-evaluation and self-regulation strategies. In addition, it was found that the students get the higher score when they use the strategy more frequently. The last finding showed that there was strong correlation between metacognitive strategies and listening comprehension skill. Students who use the metacognitive listening strategies more frequently, there will be better their listening comprehension. Cao summarized that students need to improve their knowledge about metacognitive strategies so the students are able to control the listening process and identify the appropriate strategy while they completing another comprehension task.

Solano et al, [21] conducted quasi-experimental approach about the effectiveness of metacognitive strategy for learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL) vocabulary by using the visual vocabulary app. Forty-two EFL pre service teacher divided into experimental group, 20 participants and control group, 22 participants. Students in the experimental group are given instruction to enrich their lexical knowledge, which permitted them to have check over their own thinking and decisions in learning activities, the students had the chance to control their own progress, this a kind of metacognitive strategies; monitoring their own learning. Using pre and post-tests, questionnaires and teacher's interviews, the findings proved that this app was effective as a metacognitive strategy to expand EFL

vocabulary learning, and students indicated a positive perception towards the utilize of this kind of application. It caused by some reasons; the high students' interest in technology, the easiness, user friendly, free access, and the probability of preferring the place and time to learn by themselves. Moreover, it could give motivation to learn vocabulary, supply quick feedback and construct student's confidence to develop their language skills and support the learners self-regulate their learning process.

4. ENHANCING STUDENTS' METACOGNITION SKILLS

Metacognitive strategy is needed by the students to solve the problem on the process of learning English. Unfortunately, low comprehension students are rarely to use the metacognitive strategy in their learning. Hartman [22] suggests the teachers to give the students precise instruction covered by metacognitive strategies, because only some students can establish and use this strategy spontaneously. The most crucial point is facilitating the students through exercise of self-regulation; learners will generate intentional control to their ownway of learning. Teachers can help learners to raise their consciousness and control their learning by training the learners to reveal about how they conceive, gain, recall and execute academic activities at all stages of doing learning process. Then, teachers have to persistently maintain, and expose through performance, that students are responsible for their own learning and can manage it. Moreover, to develop the students' metacognition skill, Hartman recommends the teacher to model the metacognitive strategies to the students in their education and real life since learners need to know how metacognitive looks like.

According to Mitchel in Djudin [23] there are seven ways that teachers can do to improve the metacognition as follows; (1) help students to perceive how their brains are growth, so the students can develop their critical thinking. (2) encourage the students to identify their weaknesses, establish their selves awareness on what they don't understand. (3) improve the students' higher-order thinking skills by giving opportunities to reflect on assignment. (4) provide students to keep learning journals. The use of personal learning journal can help students monitor their own thinking. Guide the learners with the questions to reflect not only what they learn, but also how they learn. (5) Use a "wrapper" to raise students' monitoring skills. A "wrapper" is a short intervention on existing activity and combine a metacognitive practice such as give tips to students before doing the learning activities, ask them to get the key point from the lesson in while activity and the post activity ask students to match the ideas on what

the teacher share. This activity will increase metacognitive monitoring skills. (6) Consider essay vs. multiple-choice evaluation. Short essay test can enhance the way learners reflect on their learning to get ready for the exams. (7) Promote the learners with reflexive thinking in order they are aware of biases. Engage the students with topic that defiances human and social biases. It can be on conversation or writing essays on the topic biases. It will challenge students to become more flexible, problem solver and critical thinkers.

5. CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study can be inferred from literature review that describes the significance, effectiveness, and kinds of metacognitive strategy in learning process. Every study supports at the point metacognitive strategy can be used to enhance students' language skills; listening, speaking, reading and writing. Furthermore, the findings indicated that metacognitive strategies raise students' academic achievement, self-regulated and self-awareness. When learners master at using metacognitive strategies in learning process, they will boost students' confidence and tend to be more critical, more self-sustaining as ESL or EFL students. Thus, the teachers should lead the students to apply the metacognitive strategies in learning English. Besides, the students need to involve metacognitive strategies in any kind of learning activities. Metacognitive strategy promotes the students to develop their skill, and learns to solve a problem.

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